

## Introduction, Establishment, and Transformation: An Initial Exploration of the Cultural Shifts and Influence of Fa Yi Chong De, Yi-Kuan-Tao in Malaysian Chinese Community

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**Abstract :** Yi-Kuan-Tao has been developing in Malaysia for nearly 60 years. It was initially introduced from mainland China and later from Taiwan starting from the 1970s. Yi-Kuan-Tao was considered a 'new religion' for the local Chinese community in Malaysia in its early stages, as Chinese immigrants primarily practiced Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity, or Catholicism upon settling in the region. The overseas propagation and development of Yi-Kuan-Tao today primarily occur through Taiwanese temples, which began spreading abroad as early as 1949. Particularly since the 1970s, with the rapid economic growth of Taiwan, various branches of Taiwanese Yi-Kuan-Tao have gained economic strength to propagate abroad, further expanding the influence of Yi-Kuan-Tao overseas. Southeast Asia is the region out from Taiwan where the propagation and development of Yi-Kuan-Tao are fastest and most concentrated. With approximately over 6 million Chinese inhabitants, Malaysia's pursuit of traditional Chinese culture has led to a flourishing interest in Yi-Kuan-Tao, particularly its advocacy of the unity of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, with an emphasis on promoting Confucian thought. Moreover, Taiwan's rapid economic development since the 1970s has enabled Yi-Kuan-Tao to allocate significant human and financial resources for external propagation efforts. Additionally, Malaysia's government has adopted a relatively tolerant policy towards religion since that time, further fostering the flourishing development of Yi-Kuan-Tao in Malaysia. Furthermore, this thesis aims to strengthen the lineage and continuity of the Yi-Kuan-Tao tradition, particularly the branch of Fa Yi Chong De, through the perspective of Heavenly Mandate (天). By examining the different origins and ethnic backgrounds, it investigates how the Malaysian Chinese community has experienced different changes through the cultural baptism of religion, thus delving into the religious influence of Yi-Kuan-Tao. Given that the Fa Yi Chong De Academy in Taiwan is currently in an active development and construction phase, academic works related to Yi-Kuan-Tao will lay a more solid academic foundation for the future establishment of the academy.

**Keywords :** initial exploration, cultural shifts, Yi-Kuan-Tao, Malaysian Chinese community

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